



## TRANSATLANTIC TRIFLES.

By SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID, BART., M.P.



TRAVELLING in North America presents many novelties. In hotels the system with regard to board is like the continental one in a *pension*. You usually pay four or five dollars a day for room and food, but in some places you are asked on arriving whether you wish to be accommodated on the American or European plan. If you choose the latter, you go to a separate restaurant in the hotel and pay for your food at the time. The food *en pension* means three substantial meals a day. It is rare to see an American take wine or beer at his dinner or supper. He drinks water only, or tea or coffee. In the prohibition States even a stranger cannot get any spirit to drink at a meal, and at Milwaukee, celebrated for its breweries, when we asked at the station hotel for a glass of beer, the young lady attendant replied "No wine, beer, or spirits sold here."

Black men discharge a variety of domestic duties. They are not, however, always the most civil of servants, and stick to their own ideas in an uncompromising manner. On one occasion at Toronto the waiter serving at our table had gone to fetch something, so I said to a man standing close by and attending to nobody, "Will you please get the lady some milk?" To which he replied sharply and summarily, "Haven't you got a waiter at your table?" I answered humbly that I thought as he was doing nothing he might be willing to supplement the other waiter's duties in his absence, but by way of reply and as if to close the conversation he turned his back on me.

In California the Chinese do most of the household work. Some are cooks, some housemaids, while others are employed in more menial offices; but whatever may be their work they generally do it well, and all are of a saving habit and intensely clannish.

The Chinese quarter<sup>1</sup> at San Francisco is most interesting. According to custom we visited it under the care of an experienced guide acquainted with the district and the people. After passing along a number of narrow, stinking, underground passages, through which it would be difficult to escape in case of fire, we found ourselves on the stage of a Chinese theatre. The pit was crammed with a standing audience, and the gallery, reserved for women, full of overcrowding. The principal actor was performing the part of a lady in a highly decorated costume with his face elegantly painted. He received 5,501 dollars for a season of eight months, the odd amount being fixed as it is not considered lucky to receive an even sum in payment of services of this kind. His good things he said in a falsetto voice, indulging in a considerable amount of gesture, and he was an obvious favourite with the audience.

We next went to a restaurant built in three floors with varying entertainment for the different classes of visitors, who paid accordingly. On the upper floor was assembled a large party of men and women, engaged in various amusements. Some of the latter were playing musical instruments, others were occupied with a round game, while others again were having a private chat in the corner, sitting on round

<sup>1</sup> It is not known exactly how many Chinese there are in San Francisco, but I believe the number exceeds thirty thousand.

stools. Two or three men were smoking opium, and others were looking on doing nothing. On a large round table in the centre of the upper room were the remains of a feast in all sorts of little Chinese dishes, and the chairs and tables and the decorations and screens between the rooms were of a kind similar to those we see in the picture books of Chinese houses.

After visiting a Joss house and several shops, we wound up our evening's walk with an examination of some of the tenement houses. A room ten or twelve feet high would in most cases be found to have a sort of half way tier divided by perpendicular partitions, so that practically in each room there were two floors, something like the two berths in the cabin of a ship, one over the other. On each side of the floor, which perhaps was four feet square or something of that kind, lived a couple of Chinese. We found the inmates lying down in strange attitudes, some smoking, some sleeping and some working. I was told that even for such accommodation the price charged is very high.

The Chinese work to a great extent in gangs, and each gang is under the control of a head man. A gentleman who was considered one of the opponents of Chinese immigration undertook a contract involving much heavy earthwork somewhere out in the country, and for six weeks or two months he employed white labour. He had great difficulty with his men, and found that the work did not progress as fast as the contract stipulated. Moreover, all kinds of impediments were put in his way, and he had practically to make separate contracts with each workman. At last the works came to a standstill altogether. A friend advised him to give up employing white labour and to arrange with the head of a Chinese gang. He took his friend's advice, and made an arrangement with a head man involving the employment of over a thousand hands. He had only one contract to make, one price to fix for labour, and one man to pay. He had not to trouble himself as to sickness or illness amongst the workmen or to find substitutes for them; all was provided for in the contract, which was successfully completed well within the time fixed in his agreement, so that he was able to make a considerable profit, whereas he had feared a heavy loss. This case shows the control which a head Chinaman has over the men under him, and the system upon which they work—but of course what Chinamen live upon would hardly be enough for a white man to starve upon. I was informed at one of the banks which does much business with the Chinese that their credit is excellent, and that when once a Chinaman had signed a bond, any money due was sure to be paid.

In some parts, and especially in the West, Indians are employed and do fair work; while for the hop picking in Washington territory they are found to serve extremely well. Many of the natives paddle down in their canoes, hollowed out from a single tree, all the way from British Columbia to get their share of this season, and in going up by steamer from Tacoma to Victoria one sees many of them returning up the sound. The Indians vary very much in their willingness to work, and their willingness depends on the tribe to which they belong.

In all parts of the United States, and in Canada, the rapidity with which towns are laid out and increase in population is very striking. For instance, Tacoma now contains a population of about 30,000 people, whereas eight years ago its site was primeval forest. It has become the terminus of the Northern Pacific Railway. The company have their shops there, and a big trade has already sprung up. It is somewhat remarkable however to notice a large building which serves as a warehouse or factory next to a plot of land with the stumps of big trees still sticking out. Most new towns are laid out for a much larger population than they at present contain. The streets are placed at right angles, and are often only half built upon. Even at such a place as Winnipeg, which contains more than 25,000 inhabitants, you see great unoccupied spaces in the middle of the town. The houses are usually built at first of wood; in which condition they are called frame houses, and remain until a fire breaks out and destroys the whole town, when they are rebuilt in brick or stone. At Seattle on Puget Sound, which is becoming a place of considerable importance, we found that half the town had been burnt some three months before, including the entire business quarter, the hotels, and nearly every store of importance. But with great rapidity they were rebuilding the whole place in a substantial manner. So great had been the demand for bricklayers, especially during the first month after the fire, that they had been able to obtain as much as six dollars a day, but when we were there the rate had fallen to about four dollars. The rate of wages is more or less regulated by the

accessibility of the place. Thus in Yellowstone Park, at the Grand Canyon, where the Northern Pacific Railway Company is building a large hotel, the carpenters come all the way from Minneapolis and St. Paul. They are lodged, fed, and paid about five dollars a day; so that a man who came with a fair stock of clothes could in the six summer months practically save the whole of his wages.

The new towns are usually remarkable for their ugliness. The Americans apparently seem to consider it unnecessary to pay any attention to the æsthetic. They are satisfied with the useful. Washington, however, is a conspicuous exception to this observation. In places like Chicago, which have grown to enormous size with great rapidity and where land is now of high value, they are erecting perhaps the loftiest and ugliest buildings in the world. There is a new block called the Auditorium, sixteen stories high, built with enormous blocks of rough hewn stone. It contains a great public hall, a big hotel, several lifts, or elevators, as they are called, and a variety of shops, but as it is opposite one of the principal lines of railway the rooms in it will be as noisy as we found those in the Richelieu a few steps lower down. Just opposite the great central post office is a building of fifteen stories standing on a very narrow piece of land, in which the object has evidently been to use every inch of space at the least cost to the builder.

Every town of any size in America is usually supplied with water and electric light and all the other requisites of civilization, including street tramways, before the authorities consider it necessary to pay attention to the paving, which is generally execrable. Broadway in New York is a remarkable example in that respect. In most cities provision has been made, by the establishment of public gardens and parks, for the proper lung space which is so desirable everywhere. At Boston the public garden is beautifully kept, and has fine flower beds and a considerable piece of water. At San Francisco there is an immense park with carpet bedding, and good grass, which is uncommon in many American towns. There are also fine trees and shrubs, and in the middle of the park is a large conservatory containing a great variety of valuable plants. At the further end stands the celebrated Cliff House, and from the terrace the sea-lions or seals may be seen disporting themselves on the big rocks standing out in the sea below.

The system of advertisement both in town and country is largely developed. Sometimes five or six miles from an important town, as you go in by rail, you see gigantic announcements painted on the stones, not of Streeter's eighteen carat gold, but of "Streeter's feet-form shoes," or of some particular cordial, or of Edwards's "giant clothing store," or other similar valuable information. The best announcement of any kind which I discovered in my tour was that opposite the principal hotel at Quebec, where in big letters I saw "Williams, Capillary and Tonsorial Artist."

The chief characteristic of America both in town and country is the rapid growth and the great size of everything, and the enormous push of the inhabitants. Every man can make his way if he is ready to do hard work, but the loafer or the idler is not appreciated anywhere. If a man goes to America and applies himself to work which he does not understand he will find it difficult to get on, as there are plenty of people ready to push him out of the way; but let a man go to work which he does understand, and in which he is prepared to give a fair day's labour for a fair day's pay, and there is no reason why he should not do very well.

There is obviously a great difference in different classes of colonists. Thus I find on farm land of the West, or of the Manitoba district of Canada, there are men who have begun with nothing, and have in the course of eight or ten years made for themselves a good home and put by a pretty store. But then they knew what they were about when they began it. Moreover, especially in Northern Canada, they must be prepared for the climate, which is severe during the long winter. In America men accommodate themselves better than Englishmen do at home to the varied difficulties of life. For instance, on the Chicago and Milwaukee line I had a couple of hours' conversation with the brakeman on our car. I found he was a man of considerable education; the son of a doctor who had been in good practice. He had inherited a fair competence, which he had lost owing to various causes. He had immediately applied for and obtained the position in which I found him, and which he had occupied for more than two years.

To go to another subject—the American habit of interviewing. Whenever a stranger of the smallest claim to a public position arrives at a place he is inter-

viewed. I had the pleasure of being interviewed several times. If I met with a good reporter, he gave a fair *résumé* of our conversation, whereas in other cases he accommodated my observations to the particular views of the paper he represented, or to the particular ideas of the town in which he lived. In one case I was asked about the strike of the dock labourers, and when my observations were published I found to my surprise that the reporter had thought it right to write about the dock-yards, which made all that I said utter nonsense. In another case the reporter was good enough to call upon me two or three times, and on each occasion I happened to be out. He grew tired of his efforts, and published a paragraph without seeing me. It began in this way, "At last we have got a live English Lord. Sir Julian Goldsmid has arrived in our city," I was sorry for him, as his hopes in this respect were not realized. In one city my interviewer was a young Englishman who was fond of a roving life and had come there for a few months during which he had found an occupation on the principal paper of the place. In another I hit upon a man of unusual ability, and he gave me more information than I gave him. On the whole I found the newspaper representatives an intelligent and most polite set of men.

The use of Americanisms, or expressions peculiar to America, is not so remarkable as we imagine. There are naturally some words which are used in a sense different from ours, but it does not follow from that that they are in any way incorrect. Thus a Scotchman says the weather is soft, whilst the American says the stock market is soft. We go to the railway station and get into the railway carriage. The Yankee goes to the depot and gets into the car. We order our carriage or our trap, as the case may be. The American sends for his waggon, which in the case of one friend I found was his phaeton. Here it is clear that it is only a different development of the language, and no incorrect use of our terms. If we thought otherwise we should not deserve the epithet "bright," which in America is always intended to mean intellectually bright. For example, I was told by one gentleman who had special knowledge on the subject, that he considered in the case of the Chamberlain fishery treaty, which was rejected by the Senate, that Chamberlain and Tupper were "very bright men, in fact brighter than the American negotiators." Again the constant use of the word "fix" strikes one at first, but one soon gets accustomed to it; and after all the expression is very practical and sensible. And so is "I guess," which above all others is a favourite with American ladies, as is with the men the use of the term an "elegant man," which does not mean elegant in our sense, but a man of fine intellect and disposition.

I had the opportunity of dining out in America more than once. When I arrived at the house of my host I was given by the servant a little envelope with a card inside with the name of the lady I was to take down to dinner written upon it: a practice which at large English dinner parties it might be well to adopt.

The country in America in some respects suffers in comparison with country in England. One sees no fine old houses or pretty parks, and except in out-of-the-way parts of the world like Yellowstone Park, or the Canadian National Park at Banff, there are no animals.

All through America and Canada, one is struck with the enormous waste of fine timber. Large numbers of fine trees may be seen lying by the road side and in the woods, rotting away, and amongst them hundreds of saplings begin to thrust up their light coloured heads. All ground too is cleared by burning the forest, and trees of great height and value are disposed of in this way. Of course before land can be cultivated it must be cleared, and it is owing in many cases to there being no market near, no means of conveyance, and no road, that the only way of getting rid of the timber is to burn it. At the same time the new timber which grows up is not of the same value as that destroyed. In the West some trees are still to be found four hundred feet in height, although there has been an enormous consumption of those great red wood giants so characteristic of that country. I was told a good story with regard to one of these big trees. A man was describing their size and what could be done with them, and he said he built himself a good sized house containing several rooms and had some capital furniture made for every room. It was only necessary for him to cut down one tree. That was sufficient for him to build the house with and have the furniture made. But whether this story is founded on actual experience or not, it is true that one can have no idea of the magnificence of these great forest trees until one has seen them.

Then again we go long distances in Scotland and even in Switzerland to see falls far inferior to the Rhine, at which we stand gazing in wonder. But a visit to the falls of Montmorency, near Quebec, or the two falls at the Grand Canyon in the Yellowstone river, or the greatest of all, Niagara, makes one see what a difference there is in these wonders of nature. The Lachine rapids and other rapids in various American rivers also afford a novel sensation to the traveller. In fact I should say that the beauty which we so often find in cities on the Continent must be looked for in nature across the Atlantic. In the great Geyser region of the Yellowstone Park you have another variety. There are four great geyser areas in the Yellowstone which owe their origin to volcanic action. Geysers throw up water at intervals, varying from a quarter of an hour, half an hour, or an hour, to days, weeks, months, or years. The greatest height to which the water is thrown is about two hundred and fifty feet, but many geysers only eject their contents to the height of twenty, thirty, fifty or a hundred feet. One sees also numbers of holes wherein the water boils, and which emit great quantities of steam, but there is no change of level. The soil around is coloured according to the minerals which act upon the water in each particular spot, and one finds opal lakes, blood rivers, tiger holes and emerald waters. In most cases the water is boiling, and in what are called "the devil's paint pots" there is a curious phenomenon. In one of these I saw the water was quiescent and not particularly opaque in a large hole about a foot from the surface of the ground. It then gradually became disturbed and rose thickening and began to steam. Then it became very turbid, some of it was thrown up above the surface, and the whole contents of the aperture seemed in a state of boiling excitement. This lasted a couple of minutes, and then gradually diminished in movement, the water lowered, and everything became quiescent again, and the water returned to its previous colour and level. The phenomenon took place at intervals of about a quarter of an hour. Again there are great blow holes where steam is discharged with the force of a powerful engine and the earth trembles under one's feet. Geysers change in their habits. Some gradually die out and new ones are developed. In the great National Park at Banff there are two basins of natural sulphur baths, one in a sort of deep cavern and the other in the open air, which are very largely used in rheumatic cases. There is a story that a crutch is shown with a label attached to it on which is written "I came here upon this; I have gone home without it," and signed by some individual. But we did not find that that was convincing proof of the virtue of the water.

Of all places perhaps the most striking is Salt Lake City, where by the industry and perseverance of a small number of pioneers, a prosperous settlement has been established, which is now becoming a place of great importance. The whole of this area has been irrigated, so that gardens and trees abound. In the city all the broad roadways are flanked with trees, and railways are being built by the energy of Mr. J. W. Young, one of the sons of the celebrated Brigham Young, which will add greatly to the importance of the neighbourhood. Salt Lake is some sixteen miles from Salt Lake City, though it looks only four or five miles off. Unfortunately we were not there at the bathing time, so that we did not have the advantage of seeing the crowds who visit the pretty bathing station which has been established. The produce in fruit and vegetables and in corn which can be obtained now from a district formerly a barren desert is quite remarkable.

I heard observations made on one occasion with regard to the large introduction of English capital, especially in the form of purchase of breweries, and I thought that one of the gentlemen present made a very good remark. He said, "I am glad English capital is coming here. There is so much to be done that if all the rest which is left behind were to come after it we should still have plenty of occupation and use for our money;" and when one has been across the great continent one sees what a wonderful variety of opportunities for profitable investment, if judiciously made, are offered in all parts of the country.

American men are principally devoted to business, and the best amongst them do not go into politics. Politics have become a trade, and I am afraid not a trade of the highest class. Nor do the men most distinguished for ability and intelligence care for politics. In some cases, especially in the local legislatures, a man is returned for one of the short parliaments simply that he may enjoy the salary paid to a legislator, and at the end of it somebody else is elected in order that he may have his turn. Everybody both in Congress and in the State Legislature is paid, and Congressmen and Senators

receive the railway mileage allowance in addition, which they are generally able to pocket, because on most lines they are allowed to pass free. All one hears with regard to politics and political men brings one to the conclusion that it is not desirable here to revert to what is admitted to be the ancient system of paying our Members of Parliament, especially when we get men of first-rate ability in all classes of society, as we do now, willing to devote the best of their energies and their time to the public service. Of course I do not mean to say that there are no men of ability in public life in America. Men like Mr. Blaine are an absolute contradiction of any such idea, but at the same time I consider that they are rather the exception than the rule. But be that as it may, the result of a visit to America is, I think, to raise one's opinion both of the country and the people, and to make one see how much has been done, and how much can be done by human energy and forethought.

## EXPECTANCY.

By SOPHY SINGLETON.

ALL is so still that I could hear the breath  
 Ev'n of a bird; the petal of a flower  
 Dropping to Earth would rouse me as from Death;  
 The lightest feather falling would have power  
 (Unrecognized till this enchanted hour)  
 To break some magic spell, above, beneath . . .  
 Whilst, only in mid-air, an insect shower  
 Proclaims its little life on this wide heath.

This is not life, nor death, nor sleep;—I wait  
 For that which cometh not; some voice or token  
 From the Divine Unseen. 'Twixt Earth and Heaven  
 My spirit hovers expectant. Ah! too late  
 'Twill be for wisdom, once my heart has striven  
 In that hard world wherein all spells are broken!